

# 8 — Community Life

Quality of life found in Clemmons is made up of the integral pieces of the community – schools, parks, green spaces, and community activities. Communities around the nation understand that businesses looking to locate in a community not only look for affordable land with development entitlements, they also evaluate the quality of the community and the quality of life a community can offer to its employees. Enhancing community life in Clemmons is essential for maintaining a healthy fiscal future and improving the character of the Village. Implementation of the objectives included in this section will make Clemmons a more attractive and unique community in the region.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

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Historically, as a small village, Clemmons has relied on Forsyth County parks, recreational facilities, and trails to serve its residents. As the community has grown in population and taken on the character of a larger community, there is now more demand for these types of facilities in Clemmons. Currently, the Village maintains one small passive pocket park in Greendale Way. The Village does not currently have the capacity to develop or maintain parks and recreational facilities.



*The Greendale pocket park is an example of a low-cost method for providing public park space within neighborhoods.*

The Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department is also limited in its ability to fund or take on maintenance of new parks and greenways in Clemmons. Balancing the need for parks and recreational spaces with the cost to provide these services may require new funding sources or a longer-term plan for incrementally providing these amenities.

## Tanglewood Park

Tanglewood Park, located on the western border of Clemmons near the Yadkin River, is an important regional amenity in Forsyth County. Offering golf, stables, tennis courts, swimming facilities, nature education programs, rental facilities for events, trails, and gardens, this park has provided Village residents with proximate recreational opportunities.

*The Tanglewood Park is an important community amenity – one of few recreational sites near the Village.*



Because of the road network and the lack of pedestrian access into the park from adjacent neighborhoods and areas, access to the park is currently limited to auto entry. The Village has been working with the County and the MPO to identify opportunities to better connect adjacent areas to the park while ensuring safety. The Village Transportation Plan includes recommendations for signed bike routes to the south of the park and multi-use paths to the north of the park to create new means of access for park visitors. Idols Road is being evaluated for bicycle and pedestrian access into the park and US-158 will have striped lanes and sidewalks leading into Tanglewood Park. Another idea that was generated during the planning process is development of a trail connection to Tanglewood Park, linking several major neighborhoods, Clemmons Elementary School, and a new Village Center.

***Objective #95: Work with County and MPO to Seek Park Access Solutions***

Continue to work with Forsyth County and the Winston-Salem Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to develop solutions to provide safe and easy access to Tanglewood Park from adjacent neighborhoods.

***Objective #96: Work with Tanglewood to Develop Local Membership Option***

Work with Tanglewood Park to investigate the cost and administrative process required for the Village to buy yearly passes for each household in the Village's corporate limits.

## Yadkin River

Another important amenity located proximate to Clemmons is the Yadkin River; however, direct access to the Yadkin River is limited from Clemmons. Improving access to this water feature could greatly enhance quality of life to Clemmons' residents. Leveraging the river asset means creating more

recreational opportunities that connect to the river. One idea is to create a trail along the river from Lewisville to Tanglewood Park. Any solution to create better river access will require a multi-jurisdictional approach and can result in positive regional outcomes.

***Objective #97: Work with Neighboring Jurisdictions to Create Access to the Yadkin River***

Work with the Forsyth County, Lewisville, and other applicable regional partners to identify a regional solution for providing better access and recreational opportunities on the Yadkin River.

## **New Local Parks**

In addition to having better access to regional parks, citizens of Clemmons would like to develop new parks in Clemmons as part of new developments and in existing neighborhoods. There is support for amending the *Unified Development Code* to require development of new park facilities as part of new residential developments. This is one way to provide more parks in the community while using few public resources to acquire land and develop parks. However, long-term maintenance of new parks in the community will require additional funding. Another opportunity is the joint-use of school parks and recreational facilities. Under a joint use agreement, the Village would share responsibility for maintaining and funding recreational operations with the public school system and in turn be allowed to use the facilities during non-school hours and weekends for community recreational leagues, events, and other activities.

There are many solutions available to increasing park and recreational facilities in Clemmons. The 1998 *Clemmons Area Development Guide* recommended development of a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to spearhead efforts to expand park offerings in Clemmons. This board can serve as an advocate for new parks and facilities, evaluate partnership opportunities, seek new funding sources, and develop a plan for developing and maintaining park facilities in Clemmons.

***Objective #98: Establish a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board***

Establish a parks and recreation advisory board to assist the Village Council in development of a plan for the provision of parks and recreational facilities in the Village.

***Objective #99: Require Park Facilities as Part of New Developments***

Amend the Unified Development Ordinance to require parks as part of new residential subdivisions in Clemmons. (See also objectives #1, #11, #48, and #87.)

***Objective #100: Explore Joint Use Opportunities with School System***

Work with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Public Schools to explore opportunities for joint use of school parks and recreational facilities. Develop intergovernmental agreements to implement joint use plans. (See also objective #2.)

## GREENSPACES

### Network of Greenways and Open Space

The creeks, streams, and wetland areas in Clemmons are in need of protection from development impacts to ensure long-term water quality and natural hydrologic functioning. While these areas are inappropriate for intense development, they do provide opportunities for passive recreation, greenways, and trails. Due to natural drainage and water flow patterns, these areas can be used to develop an inter-connected network of greenways and open spaces that protect the “green infrastructure” of the community while providing new amenities to residents.

***Objective #101: Provide Incentives to Further Protect Riparian Buffers***

Discourage construction and land disturbance activities within 100 feet of streams, lakes, or wetlands. Explore incentives for protecting these areas, such as increased densities on more appropriate areas of development sites.

***Objective #102: Seek Public Easements for Greenways***

Work with land developers to acquire public easements within stream and creek buffers for development of future greenways.

***Objective #103: Feasibility Study for Blanket Bottom Creek Trail***

Conduct a feasibility study for a Blanket Bottom Creek greenway trail. (See also objective #49.)

### Community Gardens and Farmers Market

More and more, our nation is learning about the importance of having local, healthy food sources. Obesity has become an epidemic of sorts across our nation, largely in part to the average American diet. Access to locally grown, fruits, vegetables, grains, and meats through community gardens and farmers markets are solutions that link many aspects of community. The American Community Gardening Association defines community gardening as an opportunity to “improve people’s quality of life by providing a catalyst for neighborhood and community development, stimulating social interaction, encouraging self-reliance, beautifying neighborhoods, producing nutritious food, reducing family food budgets, conserving resources and creating opportunities for recreation, exercise, therapy and education.”



*Community gardens can serve as educational community amenities that foster social interaction and provide a local healthy food source.*

The beauty of community of gardens is that they can occur on virtually any size space and in any location. Soil and natural irrigation can be improved to make any small plot into a community garden. What is needed in Clemmons to develop community gardens is advocacy and education. The science departments at local schools are one partner that could work in the community to initiate model community gardens in the community on school sites. The Village could also work with the school to create model community gardens in activity centers to promote the use of land for small gardening purposes. Likewise, the Village should work with area farming cooperatives to provide better access to farm produce and meats. Establishment of a new farmers market at an activity center, potentially a new Village Center, would provide multiple benefits to the community.

***Objective #104: Create Partnerships to Develop Community Gardens and a Farmers Market***

Work with regional partners to pursue a local community gardening program and develop a farmers market.

## CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES / ARTS

Residents of Clemmons are fortunate to have family-oriented community activities such as Monday Night at the Movies at the branch County library, wine tastings, sports competitions, golf tournaments, July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks displays, and the festival of lights in Tanglewood Park. As the community grows there is interest in having more local cultural, educational, and historic events in Clemmons. While only a short-drive away, most residents must drive to Winston-Salem to see a play, watch a movie, or experience a musical performance. Clemmons has the opportunity to be a “full-service” community that provides new opportunities for cultural enrichment that can reinforce community cohesion and sense of place.

One idea raised during the planning process is to leverage Clemmons’ proximity to regional amenities (i.e., Yadkin Wine Valley, Tanglewood Park and its event space, and regional transportation access) by sponsoring and hosting new community events. Development of a new Village Center could provide new space for hosting art exhibits, outdoor festivals and concerts, and other community events.

***Objective #105: Survey the Communities Interests for Culture/Arts***

Before making formal plans for enhancing culture and arts in the community, prepare a survey of resident’s willingness to attend and pay for new cultural arts facilities and events.

## SCHOOLS

Maintaining a high quality of life in Clemmons is directly tied to the provision of public education. Communities that experience degradation in public schools often in turn experience impacts on the greater community – neighborhood disinvestment and blight, decreasing property values, and general loss of quality of life. The three public schools and several private schools located in

Clemmons are important icons of the community. The quality of these facilities and their academic achievement records speaks to prospective residents and business owners about the quality of life that can be expected in Clemmons.

The Village should work with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Public Schools to ensure that a high quality education and state-of-the-art facilities are provided in local schools. In addition, Clemmons should work with County Schools to develop intergovernmental agreements for joint-use of facilities (i.e., parks, ballfields, auditoriums) and to jointly plan for future schools in the community.

The location of new school sites, such as the new elementary school #7, can have a significant impact on successful implementation of the Village’s future land use plan. Development of subdivisions often follow new schools and road networks can reach capacity from new school traffic. These community planning issues should be addressed jointly between the Village, the school district, and transportation planning agencies to ensure comprehensive plan objectives are achieved.

***Objective #106: Encourage Public Schools to Enhance Programs and Facilities***

Work with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Public Schools to continually improve and enhance the local public education system.

***Objective #107: Jointly Plan for New Schools***

Work with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Public Schools and transportation planning agencies to plan for new schools and school expansions in Clemmons.

***Objective #108: Joint-Use of School Facilities***

Work with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Public Schools to explore the joint-use and maintenance of public school facilities such as parks, ballfields, and auditoriums.